



INFOCUS

# DRIVING INNOVATION

INSPIRE INNOVATE INVEST INDULGE

AS A SECOND-GENERATION LEADER OF FAMILY-OWNED BUSINESS JOMOO, R&D VICE PRESIDENT AND EUROPE MANAGING DIRECTOR XIAOWEI LIN IS PUTTING INNOVATION AT THE CENTRE OF HIS VISION.

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Innovation is in the DNA of family-owned business Jomoo. Since its founding 32 years ago, Jomoo has become one of the leading kitchen and bathroom ware manufacturers in China. Xiaowei Lin, Vice President of R&D for Jomoo Group and Managing Director of Jomoo Europe, is one of the second generation of family members that is helping run this organisation to ensure it meets the needs of customers for decades into the future.

When the business started in 1989, the focus was on product hardware, then they moved into ceramics and, in recent years, the product range offered has expanded even further. “We focus on the kitchen and bathroom areas, and also balcony areas, because the balcony is a special living space in China. We are in a traditional sector, but we are working to bring cutting-edge technology into our industry,” he says.

## SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

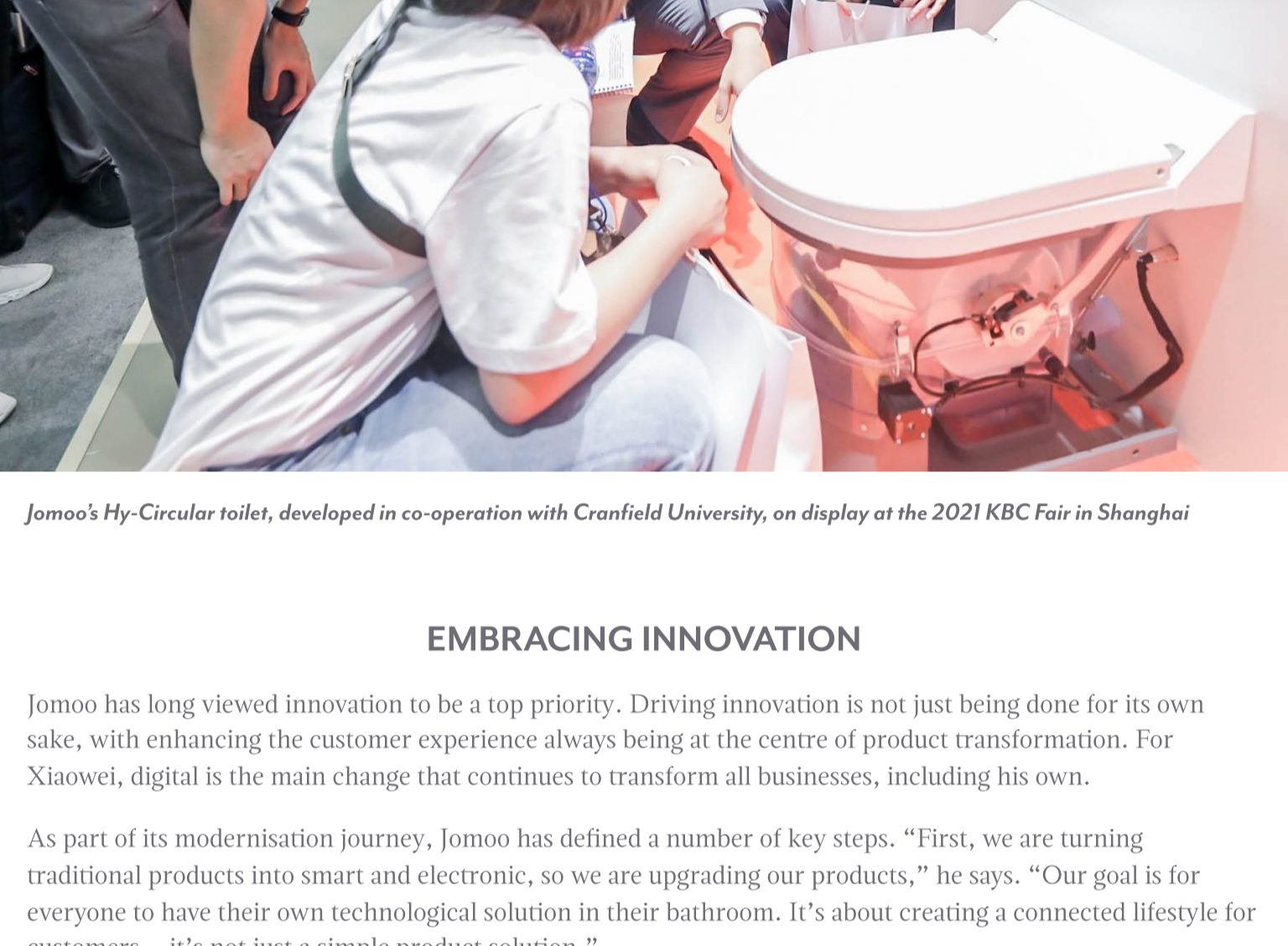
With some businesses in China, especially in the south of the country, only lasting to the second generation, Xiaowei is fully aware of the responsibility he has to run this business well and, because of this, he works hard to get it right. “Right now, we have over 15,000 employees, so this means 15,000 families. For us, it’s a major social responsibility,” Xiaowei explains.

Effectively managing an organisation as large as Jomoo is no small feat. A diverse range of people make up the employee base at Jomoo and each generation has their own unique culture and way of working.

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“What I’m seeing right now is young employees who have a different education and background than older staff. The main difference is the younger generation want the organisation they work for to share their values, it’s not just about money for them. So if they are not happy, they will simply look for another job elsewhere.”

At 27 years old, Xiaowei is in a unique position to relate to the priorities and issues held by younger staff members. “As I am also young, I like to work with employees as a team member, not as a leader. By doing this, we can discuss everything together and reach decisions together, not just from the top,” he adds. This bottom-up approach helps ensure that all employees feel like their voice is heard and their point of view genuinely matters to the leadership team.



Jomoo’s Hy-Circular toilet, developed in co-operation with Cranfield University, on display at the 2021 KBC Fair in Shanghai

## EMBRACING INNOVATION

Jomoo has long viewed innovation to be a top priority. Driving innovation is not just being done for its own sake, with enhancing the customer experience always being at the centre of product transformation. For Xiaowei, digital is the main change that continues to transform all businesses, including his own.

As part of its modernisation journey, Jomoo has defined a number of key steps. “First, we are turning traditional products into smart and electronic, so we are upgrading our products,” he says. “Our goal is for everyone to have their own technological solution in their bathroom. It’s about creating a connected lifestyle for customers – it’s not just a simple product solution.”

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With many people having stayed in their apartments over the last 16 months due to COVID-19 restrictions, now would seem to be a good time to offer customers a tech-enabled home living solution that better meets their needs. Among Jomoo’s offerings in this space are the Sensa Collection, a smart bathroom that adjusts itself to a user’s preferences and boosts wellness by providing health analysis, and the Hy-Circular toilet, the world’s first water-free flushing latrine, which was co-developed with Cranfield University in the UK.

**Schumannndesign**

Industrial form development “made by Schumannndesign” is successful throughout the world. Three decades of ambitious effort have resulted in the creation of many timeless and functional products, at the same time earning dozens of renowned design awards.

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But whatever cultural environment a design may be intended for, the aesthetics and functionality must always be keyed to meeting human practices and needs. A product should be shaped by logic and clarity, with due account taken of innovative, economic and ecological factors.

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Many of these new products are being prepared for launch into the market, with Xiaowei being hopeful that they will have a positive impact on customers. “For these solutions, we are thinking beyond just basic daily needs and making products that can create a smile and change a person’s mood,” he says.



Xiaowei Lin presenting to the audience

## SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

The concept of sustainability is also baked into the long-term strategy of Jomoo. As a customer-focused family-run business, they are acutely conscious of the need to become more environmentally friendly and sustainable. A new ceramic factory is being constructed to help reduce the carbon footprint of fabricating products, with artificial intelligence helping meet this aim.

“It’s all automatic in our new factory. We are achieving a seven per cent energy reduction, alongside a 30 per cent human resource reduction. As part of this, we are really focused on creating some new research and development material to keep up our innovation and to position our company in the right place,” Xiaowei concludes. “This is not just for the short-term; we are committed to reducing our environmental burden in our long-term strategy.”